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Content reading instruction as it relates to the secondary social studies curriculum

Paula L. Jacobs

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CONTENT READING INSTRUCTION AS IT RELATES TO THE SECONDARY SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM

A Project Submitted to
The Faculty of the School of Education
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of
Master of Arts
in
Education: Reading Option
By
Paula L. Jacobs, M.A.
1978

APPROVED BY:
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PROJECT OVERVIEW

In the following project, the author has endeavored to demonstrate why reading instruction is important in the secondary social studies curriculum and how this may be achieved. In order to fully understand why reading instruction is necessary at this level, it must be noted that: 1. Elementary reading skills are not sufficient for dealing with more complex subject matter material, 2. there is a wide range of reading and learning ability in any class situation, 3. the difficulty level of some texts may impede learning through reading, and 4. the specific vocabulary unique to the content area may restrict reading achievement.

The author also has addressed the issues of responsibility concerning content reading instruction, implementation of content reading instruction, and the kind of reading instruction that is necessary in the secondary social studies curriculum.

Social studies, as does each individual field, requires reading instruction of a specific nature. The student must be taught to: 1. Locate specific information, 2. determine the authenticity and validity of sources, 3. see relationships that involve time, sequence, comparison, and
cause/effect, 4. make inferences and predict outcomes, 5. draw conclusions and generalize, 6. apply facts to solve problems, 7. use his/her background and experience, 8. interpret maps, graphs, charts, and tables, and 9. read critically to detect discrepancies, propaganda, and bias. Reading instruction should also be used to: 1. Awaken the student's curiosity, 2. establish a persistent habit of voluntary reading in the subject, 3. develop standards of precision and accuracy in reading, 4. develop the habit of reading with a purpose, and 5. establish the habit of inquiry.

Social studies materials may be written at any of three levels of comprehension: 1. Literal, 2. interpretive, and 3. evaluative or critical. Reading skills in each of these categories must be developed and improved. As a student progresses through school, his/her skills in reading should develop to compensate for the increased difficulty in subject material. The author of this project has endeavored to demonstrate one means by which social studies material may be individualized and reading skills taught in the content classroom. This goal may be achieved by using process and study guides to supplement the reading material. These guides may be individualized to meet the needs of each student in the course.
INTRODUCTION, DESIGN OF PROJECT, AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

It is important in today's society that we as educators recognize the fact that our rapidly changing world places great demands on its people and that literacy is not only the ability to read and write, but also the ability to utilize these skills to become knowledgeable and actively responsible citizens. Considering this increased demand, reading instructors must make a concerted effort to produce efficient readers.

It is the author's intent in this project to consider a means through which reading instruction in a specific curriculum area might be improved. In order to do this a review of the literature on content reading instruction has been conducted and a series of reading guides for use in a secondary social studies class has been developed. The author has endeavored to illustrate that there is a need for content reading instruction. This need stems from the following causes: 1. Elementary reading skills are not sufficient for dealing with more complex subject matter material, 2. there is a wide range of reading and learning ability in any class situation, 3. the difficulty level of some texts may actually impede learning for some students, and 4. the specific vocabulary unique to the content area may restrict reading. The author has also
addressed the issues of responsibility concerning content reading instruction, implementation of content reading instruction, and the kind of reading instruction that is necessary in the secondary social studies curriculum.

Is There a Need for Content Reading Instruction?

Elementary Reading Skills Are Not Sufficient for Dealing with More Complex Subject Matter Material

Reading is no longer considered a basic decoding skill to be taught only in the elementary school. Gradually, authorities in education have come to realize that reading consists of a series of complex vocabulary and comprehension skills that requires constant development and refinement throughout a student's education. In addition, new skills unique to specific subject matter must be introduced and developed in a systematic structured way. Gray and Reese elaborate on this point in their book, Teaching Children to Read.

Reading in the basic reader constitutes an easier task for children than reading in the content fields. Various important factors are controlled in the basic reader which cannot be similarly controlled in books dealing with subject-matter content. For example: vocabulary in the content fields is usually more difficult; new terms are introduced faster and with fewer repetitions; more facts are presented to the reader; greater retention is expected; and frequency in historical, geographical, and other such materials. If we accept the premise that reading is more than just
the decoding of words, then reading instruction in the content areas becomes a necessity. For our purposes we will define reading as "a thinking process which includes decoding of symbols, interpreting the meanings of the symbols, and applying the ideas derived from the symbols."³

The decoding process, as important as it is, does not complete the reading act.

Word recognition is a pre-requisite to reading, but does not guarantee understanding. Comprehension requires knowledge, not only of the meaning of words but other relationships in sentences, paragraphs, and longer passages. It involves understanding of the intent of the author, and may go beyond literal recorded facts to hidden meanings or implications.⁴

The second aspect of reading is interpreting the meanings of the decoded symbols. The reader must be able to associate meaning as well as sound with the symbols, and draw on ideas he/she has developed in relationship to the symbols.

Finally, the reader must be able to apply the ideas which are developed through the decoding and interpretive processes. "For learnings to become the full property of the learner, he must use them."⁵ Teachers of content subjects must show students how to organize ideas and keep them readily accessible for appropriate use. "Proper reading of resource materials requires that students interpret what they decode and effectively use the ideas they acquired."⁶
In many cases secondary content teachers expect learning from the reading lab to transfer to their subject matter. Strang in her article, "Developing Reading Skills in the Content Areas," points out:

Specific reading skills will not automatically transfer from basal reading programs to specific fields. However, specific instruction in the reading of a particular subject matter improves reading in general, because many attitudes and reading skills are common to all subjects.7

Robert Karlin concurs with this idea by stating:

These skills may be related to those previously taught, but they must be treated in a deliberate way with careful instruction followed by meaningful practice.8

Albert Kingston adds:

Reading in the content areas provides an essential opportunity to apply the skills learned in the basal reading program, as well as to extend and refine those skills in a practical realistic setting.9

Herber discusses the principle of transformation or the adaptation of skills.

There is horizontal transformation as students adapt reading skills to various subjects within a grade level. There is also vertical transformation as students progress from grade to grade within a subject and adapt skills to meet the increased sophistication of content materials at successive levels.10

It seems fairly logical to conclude that the basic decoding and comprehension skills learned in early grades simply may not be adequate to deal with the increasingly
more complex reading material. Unfortunately, many reading lab programs are narrow in scope and designed primarily to meet the needs of remedial students, and therefore, do not effectively deal with the specific skills encountered in the content area. The content teacher must assist in the effort to equip students with more highly-developed skills.

There is a Wide Range of Reading and Learning Ability in Any Class Situation

It can hardly be denied that there will be a wide range of ability and achievement among students in any given classroom situation. Recent data quoted by Wilma Miller in her book, Teaching Reading in the Secondary School, indicates:

Nationwide about twenty percent of the students in a typical inner-city high school at least fifty percent of the students are reading below grade level.\(^\text{11}\)

If reading scores are used as a basis for grouping, the teacher will find a wide range of ability. This is partially due to the fact that there is not a significantly high correlation between IQ and reading scores, and partially because reading is extremely complex and a series of variables comprise the reading score.\(^\text{12}\) If ability is used as the criteria for grouping, one will find a range of achievement in reading. Again, we have a score that is a composite of various sub-scores, and this in itself tends to mask strengths and weaknesses in specific areas.\(^\text{13}\) Standardized reading tests are continually criticized for many weaknesses
and misuses, but they do show adequately that a class has a wide range of performance in reading. Tests do not show if the variance in scores is due to vocabulary, background concepts, language-usage differences, memory, or inferential reasoning, to mention only a few. And the type of general vocabulary and comprehension material used on a standardized test does not yield any information as to how an individual would perform in specific content areas. Students may also differ in their ability to absorb and utilize or transfer information to new situations. All of these factors can and do contribute to variance in ability to learn from the printed page. And the teacher must be aware of this situation in order to deal with it effectively. 14

Before moving on, it might be wise to examine some approaches that have been utilized in an attempt to meet the needs of students. One effort to deal with varying ability levels has been the use of multilevel texts. A teacher can gather resource materials written at a wide range of difficulty, representing various points of view, and treating a variety of topics. These materials can be distributed to students, keeping level of difficulty commensurate with ability. Then all students can benefit from the resource material in a class discussion. Another approach is the use of multiple texts. In this instance, the teacher assigns different sources. These materials are not selected on a basis of readability level. Both
approaches have developed in reaction to the single text, and may in fact make a course more interesting, but they can not be expected to meet the needs of all students with reading problems. The multilevel approach is a good start, but the students still need to be taught how to use the materials. Durrell makes a very important observation on this point.

Although there has been a constant concern about materials being written on different levels for children with different reading abilities, materials of the same reading level can be used for an entire class if the teacher provides the right amount and type of study help. It is possible that the differences among pupils in their need for study guides of different levels is greater than the differences in vocabulary load required to adjust to them.

The basic point here is that if students are guided properly, whether in multilevel or single texts, their individual needs can be met.

Individualization of instruction is accomplished by what is done with the material, whether single or multiple sources. Individualization does not lie in the material itself.

This is the essence of good content reading instruction.

The Difficulty Level of Some Texts May Actually Impede Learning For Some Students

The topic of readability has received a great deal of attention over the years. Presently, there are more than a dozen formulas to predict the readability of textbooks.
The first such formula was developed by Irving Lorge. By evaluating the relative number of different uncommon words, the average sentence length, and the relative number of prepositional phrases the teacher could get a good index of readability in terms of grade scores. In 1943, Rudolf Flesch produced a readability formula using three factors: average sentence length, relative number of affixed morphemes, and relative number of personal references.

Since that time, studies have been conducted by other authorities in the field such as Edgar Dale and Jeanne Chall, and more recently John Bormuth. In his studies involving use of the cloze test, Bormuth has made efforts to measure multiple linguistic variables. However, to date no adequate instruments for measuring the interest and aesthetic responses elicited in subjects have been developed.

It is not the purpose of this paper to discuss the merits of one formula over another. It is sufficient to say that many formulas have been developed and have been useful in predicting readability with a relative degree of accuracy. However, the degree of difficulty tends to vary from one formula to another, and not all factors are considered in all formulas. So, while a text may be designated for a certain grade, it may not always be appropriate in terms of difficulty level. Considering the range of ability within a class, the chances of a book being able to meet the needs of each student would be next to impossible.
Strange and Allington in their article, "Considering Text Variables in Content Area Reading," discuss their approach to evaluating a text selection in terms of vocabulary and concept difficulty. This approach seems particularly valuable for the content teacher. Instead of utilizing the traditional readability formulas, they use estimates of conceptual difficulty and decoding ease as predictors of difficulty. In estimating conceptual difficulty a helpful indicator is whether a high frequency synonym for the word in question can be found. If a synonym for a word that symbolizes a concept can not be found, then the passage containing that word will pose more of a problem to students. The other element they consider in evaluating vocabulary is decoding ease. If the word in question is phonetically regular it will not seem to be as much of a problem as the phonetically irregular word.

The combination of conceptual difficulty and decoding ease yields three types of words that may need introduction prior to reading:

Type I-Concept words with little or no decoding difficulty
Type II-Non-concept words with decoding irregularities
Type III-Concept words the decoding irregularities

The type of word would dictate the type of instruction for introduction. Obviously, words falling into category III would require the most attention.

Strange and Allington go on to discuss paragraph difficulty. Paragraphs should be analyzed for three factors:


importance to goal, syntax, and vocabulary. The teacher should first determine if a certain passage is important in terms of the objective for reading the selection. The paragraphs that directly apply to specified goal should be indicated in some way. Next the teacher should consider syntactic complexity. When a paragraph contains a number of long sentences, you can conclude that the meaning may prove somewhat elusive to some students. The final element is again vocabulary. After considering each of these elements, the teacher should then structure his/her lesson to best equip students to deal with the material.

The Specific Vocabulary Unique to the Content Area May Restrict Reading

The subject of vocabulary has been dealt with briefly in the previous section, and it will again be discussed in the area of implementation. Therefore, it will be adequate to say at this point that the technical vocabulary found in content materials and words taking on special meanings within certain context must be recognized and dealt with prior to reading. For example: the word "assemble" may mean to put together, but in a social studies context it may mean to come together. Students should be made aware of these shifts in meaning. Virtually all the sources dealing with content reading instruction consider vocabulary study to be of prime importance.
Who Is Responsible For Content Reading Instruction?

This seems to be the biggest question concerning content area reading instruction. In many secondary schools the responsibility is placed on the language arts teachers and/or the reading specialist. There are problems in assuming these skills have been or will be taught elsewhere. As has already been stated, various reading skills are particularly applicable to certain subjects, therefore, it would seem logical to expect that the respective content teachers assume some of the responsibility for reading instruction. Nila Banton Smith stresses this point in her book, Reading Instruction for Today's Children.

... there are unique differences in skills used in different subject matter fields, and that while general reading ability is operative in all reading to a certain extent, there is also definite need for development of specific curriculum areas.24

According to Herber in his book, Teaching Reading in Content Areas, it is the reading teacher's primary responsibility to teach a set of skills. He/she arranges the specified skills in a sequential order, analyzes the needs of his/her students, selects appropriate materials, and determines the area of concentration and level of sophistication for instruction. The reading teacher is not necessarily concerned with the content of his instructional materials, as long as they illustrate the necessary skills.

The content teacher, on the other hand, has specific
subject matter to impart to his students. He concerns himself not with the sequential development of reading skills, but with the sequential development of ideas. Skills are developed functionally, not directly. The skills to be taught are determined by the content, not the reverse.  

All too often it is at this point where content teachers face a dilemma. Pressed for time, they abandon skill instruction or assume that it has been attained, for their first responsibility—content. However, as research has proven, reading and study skills related to a course need not be taught separately, but can be incorporated within the curriculum. "Skills can be taught simultaneously with the course content; content and process need not be separated." Not only is this approach entirely practicable, but it may well be the most efficient way to provide reading instruction and maximize utilization and transfer of skills.

How Can Content Reading Instruction Best Be Implemented?

Most likely the best approach for developing and effective content area reading program would be to utilize the content expertise of the content teacher and the reading methodology of the reading specialist. This has been the general theme of many articles written on the subject by authorities in the field. A variety of these articles will be referred to throughout the course of this paper. Mary Newsome discusses this point in her article, "Teaching
Content area teachers are the most qualified to teach the unfamiliar language, the purpose for reading in the respective disciplines, and the clarifications of the concepts. Combining the efforts of these effective teachers with the basic knowledge of teaching reading would be an extremely productive way to achieve this goal of teaching all students to read to their fullest potential.28

A. Sterl Artley in an excerpt from his doctoral dissertation states:

... reading comprehension involves both general and specific factors. Hence, the reading teacher furnishes the nucleus around which basic training is given, while the other teachers apply these basic learnings to their particular instructional area, as well as develop those other skills and abilities that appear uniquely related to their own content field.29

In explaining his comprehensive reading program model, Charles Peters states:

For a number of reasons, the content teacher must become the focal point of the comprehensive model. First, a major portion of secondary students come in contact with content teachers. Carlson suggests that as much as ninety percent of students' time is spent with content teachers. Second, content teachers disseminate a significant amount of information via the printed page. This process requires the application of specific skills if the reader is to comprehend and use such information. Content teachers must become conversant with how they can infuse these skills into their materials. In addition, they must possess concern for guiding students
Leonard Courtney outlines the same type of joint effort in his article "Recent Developments in Reading Instruction in the Content Areas." He maintains that it is a question of economics. School personnel should be utilized to their fullest extent.

Reading teachers are too well qualified to spend all of their time with a small number of students. Even under the most ambitious schedule, a reading teacher can meet no more than one hundred fifty students a day. The training and talent of these teachers can best be exploited by making them consultants to content teachers, but not on an incidental basis. He goes on to say: If reading instruction is adequately melded with content, there will be no need for special reading instruction.31

It is not the author's intention to debate this issue, or discuss the organization of the ideal reading program. The point to be stressed is that there is a great necessity for content reading instruction, whether it is done in conjunction with the school or district reading specialist or consultant, or is solely the responsibility of the individual content teacher.

Once a teacher or an entire staff has recognized the need and benefits of content reading instruction, they will need to follow certain preparatory steps in order to implement a program. The first step would be to determine objectives and evaluate texts. Textbooks are the primary source of information in the content courses in the
secondary school. As has been discussed earlier, their degree of difficulty will differ depending on the complexity of the concepts and vocabulary level contained within. The teacher should analyze the course materials, whether single or multiple texts, by identifying the major ideas or concepts to be acquired, the technical vocabulary, and the skills to be utilized to identify, understand, and apply the important ideas.

Content teachers are well acquainted with the material in their areas of specialization and know the major concepts they want their students to master. The teacher should then determine what difficult technical vocabulary is present in the reading selection in order to prepare the students to handle it. The text must also be examined to determine the organizational pattern used by the author and skills students must apply to acquire information and develop the ideas in the text.32

A subject-matter teacher . . . needs only ask himself . . . 'What competencies must my students have to carry out the learning tasks in this course as I teach it?' . . . forget the labels and think of the tasks that the students must perform. Those are the skills that must be taught or reviewed regardless of the factors that may emerge from an elaborate study.33

Once the objectives have been set, determine the set of skills that are needed to reach those objectives, and determine the difficulty level of the materials. To
maximize understanding of any given reading assignment, the teacher should first expose the students to some background information and brief review. The background information should refer to those major and minor concepts inherent in the material to be covered and which have been previously defined as course objectives or desired goals. The review provides a frame of reference for the students. "Review provides intellectual hooks on which new skills can be hung." It has a narrower focus than the background information. This process may be used as a motivational device to get the students thinking about the subject. Of course, other motivational devices such as pictures, films, slides, etc. may also be employed.

The next step would be to establish the purpose for reading. A student should know what he/she is reading for. Before the reading assignment is given, the teacher should supply the students with a series of questions, statements, concepts, and skills to be covered. "A student who looks for ideas as he/she reads will find them; but if he/she looks for nothing he/she finds that, too!" William Durr in his article, "Improving Secondary Reading Through the Content Subjects," states:

"... it is never appropriate to tell a student merely to read a certain chapter. We must help him set his purpose for reading. If we want him to draw general conclusions from the material, then we must indicate this purpose before he reads it..."
If we want him to read the material for certain kinds of specific details, once again we should point out this purpose and direct him toward these details.\textsuperscript{36}

Jo Stanchfield emphasizes this same principle.

Failure to establish specific purposes for reading results in apathetic attitudes and ineffective reading habits. Teachers in the content fields should establish and explain the objectives of each assignment before the students begin to read.\textsuperscript{37}

We must keep in mind that the teacher's role is that of a guide and a director of learning. And if our ultimate goal is the acquisition of skills to ensure independence in learning, then we must guide students in that direction. "The purpose is not conformity, but ultimate independence."\textsuperscript{38}

When the objective or purpose for reading has been clearly established, then the guidance phase of instruction is ready to begin. Herber suggests that his phase be facilitated through the use of reading guides, either developed for small group or individual use. The different types of guides will be discussed later. At this point, it should be noted that whatever form the lesson may take, it should be structured enough so that students know what they are to learn and what skills they are utilizing.

But, it should be loose enough to compensate for differences in ability and to allow for a certain amount of individuality and creativity in learning. Herber explains it in these terms:
This should be a structure that will give students a conscious experience in the application of the skill and, simultaneously, an understanding of the course content; provide for individual differences in ability and achievement among students in classes; ensure success in the assigned reading.\textsuperscript{38}

Of course, the final stage of this process is independence. Independence in learning has been achieved when the student has sufficiently mastered the skills that allow him to progress on his own in the pursuit of knowledge.

Independence is not produced merely by expecting or demanding it. It is produced only by structuring lessons so that students are clearly shown how to apply the skills and are guided until they can handle them on their own. Independence is not the starting point but, rather the end product of good teaching.\textsuperscript{39}

The material reviewed in this section indicates that elementary reading skills may not be sufficient to deal with the increased difficulty of content material, the range of abilities in class situations calls for individualization of instructional materials, the difficulty levels of certain texts may impede learning in some cases, and the specific and technical vocabulary encountered in content material needs consideration when designing lessons. Teachers of content subjects must be aware of these difficulties and make provision to deal with them. Each instructor has a responsibility to provide reading
instruction within the content curriculum.

**Review of Literature Applying to Social Studies**

**What Type of Reading Instruction Is Needed in the Social Studies?**

The first of the paper was concerned with establishing a need for content area reading instruction and discussing what, in fact, content reading instruction is, how it benefits the student, and how a program can be implemented. However, all of this discussion was in fairly general terms. In the following section, the author shall continue to discuss the implementation of content reading instruction by making it relative to the secondary social studies curriculum. By focusing on a specific content area, an attempt has been made to make the paper both practical and relevant. It is felt that this will best be accomplished by actually demonstrating the type of materials that will facilitate reading skills instruction in the social studies.

As has already been stated, it is the duty of all subject area teachers to make good reading useful in their classes. In an article on "Recent Developments in Reading in Social Studies," Alice Flickenger states:

> We must give special instruction in reading when we confront students with material beyond their reading level or material with difficulties peculiar to the social studies field."
Ms. Flickenger emphasizes the fact that during the past few years a tremendous change has taken place in social studies curriculum materials and approaches to instruction.

The familiar expository method has been questioned and frequently condemned. We find that many curriculum projects and classroom teachers are placing new emphasis on the inductive or discovery approach to learning.

There is less explaining, more pondering. The textbook is often rejected. Whenever possible, students are presented with data—raw material—and encouraged to generalize from it.41

The ramifications of such a change in curriculum are significant because they make content reading instruction all the more necessary. If a student is expected to utilize various types of source materials, then he/she must be shown how to do this. The materials for learning are taking on new forms, often a complexity of films, tapes, primary readings, games, sort cards, charts, transparencies, and pictures. The new social studies includes understandings from many disciplines. It arranges a sequential program out of this basic material. It stresses the building of generalizations out of observations and experiences of the students themselves.42

Specifically speaking, what does this mean for reading in social studies?

Ruth Strang has written an excellent article, "Developing Reading Skills in the Content Areas," in which
she defines the various skills used in reading social studies materials.

The study of history requires extensive reading and critical evaluation of many sources and points of view. Although simple forms of these skills should be introduced in the early grades, the more complicated forms must be taught as they become necessary in each subject. It has been proved that specialized instruction in these skills pays off in general academic achievement.

Strang's list of skills includes:

1. Locating specific information
2. Determining the authenticity and validity of sources
3. Seeing relationships that involve time, sequence, comparison, and cause/effect
4. Making inferences and predicting outcomes
5. Drawing conclusions and generalizing
6. Applying facts gained to the solution of problems
7. Using one's background of experience and knowledge
8. Correctly interpreting maps, graphs, charts, and tables
9. Reading critically to detect discrepancies, propaganda, and bias

Strang notes that in addition to these specific skills, there are also certain skills, attitudes, and approaches to reading that should be emphasized.

1. To awaken to student's curiosity and give him a desire for more historical knowledge
2. To establish a persistent habit of voluntary reading in the subject--newspapers, magazines, current books, and historical novels
3. To develop standards of precision and accuracy in reading
4. To encourage the student to read with the intent to remember significant ideas
5. To develop the habit of reading with a purpose
6. To establish the habit of inquiry—reading to discover new thoughts and feelings.

In order to approach the task of demonstrating how these skills can be taught along with content, the various reading skills have been divided into categories. The first category includes basic eye motility and word recognition skills. Generally speaking, by the time a student has reached high school, he should have fairly well mastered the skills in this category. However, in the event he/she has not, this individual should be receiving special help from a reading specialist. Of course, this student may also be enrolled in the regular content curriculum, so provision will have to be made for him/her. Since the number of students having severe problems of this nature would be minimal in the majority of classroom situations, these skills will be covered briefly and the methods of instruction incorporated within the pre-reading or vocabulary-building activities.

Students with word-recognition deficiencies can be aided by the inclusion of activities related to building a larger sight-word vocabulary and improvement of phonetic and structural skills. In order to facilitate this type of learning, the teacher might include the phonetic
spelling of each selected vocabulary word, or syllabicate each word, pointing out familiar roots and affixes.

As has been stressed continually throughout the paper, vocabulary-building exercises are needed to help ensure a greater understanding of the conceptual material contained in the content. There are any number of methods for implementing a vocabulary preview. Herber, Miller, and Stanchfield offer a variety of ideas in this area.

The second area of concern is, of course, comprehension; literal, interpretive, and evaluative. The evaluative level can also be defined as critical reading, and therefore is a category by itself. Because critical reading is particularly important in the social studies, it will be treated as a separate category. Literal comprehension can be defined as the ability to identify, isolate or extract specific information that is clearly stated in a given passage. The following list enumerates the sub-skills that would fall into this category. The ability to read graphic materials should also fit into this category.

Literal sub-skills:

1. Locating specific information
2. Identifying and understanding key words, main ideas, and concepts
3. Correctly interpreting maps, graphs, and tables
4. Seeing relationships involving time, comparison, sequence, and cause/effect

Interpretive comprehension is a higher level thought-gathering process that encompasses the following skills:

1. Making inferences
2. Predicting outcomes
3. Drawing conclusions
4. Generalizing
5. Detecting inferred main ideas and purpose

Critical reading can be defined as evaluating or judging what is read in terms of specific criteria which the reader has formulated through his/her previous reading or experiences. It involves a synthesizing process and covers the following skills:

1. Applying facts gained to the solution of problems
2. Using one's background of experiences and knowledge
3. Reading to detect discrepancies, propaganda, and bias
4. Evaluating the authenticity and validity of material
5. Forming opinions

With the advent of the inquiry approach, the critical or evaluative level is more important than ever. Yet, many high school students have never been taught to think or read critically. Bond and Wagner in Teaching the Child to Read give a very accurate account of the critical reading process.

Critical reading is the process of evaluating the authenticity and validity of material and of formulating an opinion about it. It is essential for anyone dealing with controversial issues to be able to read critically. Because the social studies deal with human relationships, they naturally discuss many controversial issues. The child will get into difficulty in reading critically in the social studies if he is unable to understand the problem which faces him, remember the problem while reading, and hold himself to the problem. He must judge the pertinency of the material. He must understand
the meanings implied as well as stated. He must evaluate the source from which he is reading. He must differentiate the important from the unimportant fact. He must detect statements of fact as opposed to statement of opinion. He must judge the relative accuracy of conflicting statements. He must be able to appraise the authoritativeness and accuracy of the material. He must be able to detect treatments warped by prejudice. He must keep in mind the author's percepts and intentions and judge whether in drawing his conclusions the author considered all the facts presented. 

Miller includes a fourth category called creative reading. At this level the student is able to read critically and apply knowledge he/she has gained to his/her own real-life problems and situations. The ultimate goal of education—-independence—has been reached.

Then of course, there is a whole other category of study skills that are necessary for critical and creative reading in any content field. While reference has been made to such skills as the ability to utilize source materials in a library, further discussion is actually beyond the scope of this project.

Considering the previously stated information concerning content reading instruction and reading in the field of social studies, the author will endeavor to demonstrate how materials may be designed and presented in order to facilitate reading and learning in social studies. For this purpose, the eleventh grade U.S. History text, Search
for Freedom, published by Scott, Foresman, and Co. has been selected.

As this literature relating specifically to social studies content indicates there are certain reading skills that must be mastered in the course of study, technical vocabulary that must be dealt with, and various levels of comprehension to be developed. Various chapters may call for instruction in certain skills. Of course, not all skills can be demonstrated in any one chapter. However, an effort has been made to illustrate the majority of skills from Strang's list.

A variety of study and process guides is discussed by Harold Herber in Teaching Reading in Content Areas, Carl Smith in Teaching Reading in Secondary School Content Subjects, and David Shepherd in Comprehensive High School Reading Methods. As was pointed out earlier, these materials, whatever form they take, should be flexible enough to accommodate a variety of needs and abilities. An instructor may want to create a number of guides or worksheets for a particular chapter, or he/she may want to require different students to do different sections of a given guide or worksheet, depending on his/her need for guidance. Students functioning with a lower reading ability and fewer interpretive skills would be required to concentrate at the literal level of comprehension, with a gradual move into the interpretive and evaluative
levels. Whereas, a student reading at or above grade level may require minimal work at the literal level and be able to move right into questions and problems dealing with interpretive and evaluative skills.

In the section that follows, the reader will see the student guide for each section of the chapter entitled, "Post War Politics," a teacher's edition complete with instructions and referencing, and a copy of the chapter as it appears in the textbook.
SUMMARY AND LIMITATIONS

The evidence presented in this project seems to point to the fact that reading instruction in the content subjects can and should be an integral part of any good instructional program. The evidence indicates that elementary reading skills are not comprehensive enough to deal with many kinds of content material, that there is a wide range of reading and learning ability in any class situation, the difficulty level of some texts may impede learning for some students, and the specific and technical vocabulary unique to the content area may restrict reading.

In conclusion, the author has endeavored to demonstrate one technique for dealing with the above mentioned problems in a secondary social studies context. Other approaches to dealing with the problem may be every bit as successful. The project is limited in that it does not explore other means of dealing with this problem.
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SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON ASSIGNMENTS
Chapter 20—"Postwar Politics"—1921-1932

Part I: Review and Motivation

Activity: Word Association Test

Directions: Select ten words that typify the time period (1920's) and ask the students to put down the first thing that comes to mind after each word or words has been stated. Then read and discuss student responses.

Example:

1. Flapper
2. Al Capone
3. Charleston
4. "Bathtub gin"
5. "The Crash"
6. Charles Lindbergh
7. Silent Movies
8. Raccoon coat
9. Speakeasy
10. Prohibition

Part II: Establishing the Purpose for Reading

Activity: The students are given a series of questions that should be answered as they read.

Directions: Instruct the students to be looking for answers to the following questions as they read. The level of each question is noted.

Example:

1. What was the American attitude toward "labor" following WWI? (literal)
2. How were civil liberties threatened during the Red Scare? (literal)
3. Against which groups did the quota system discriminate? (interpretive)
4. In what way was the Harding administration involved in scandal? (literal)
5. Against which groups were the actions of the KKK directed in the 1920's? (literal)
6. Why was prohibition hard to enforce? (literal)
7. Why did Hoover oppose using federal money for relief of the unemployed? (literal)
8. Why did the issue of war debts lead to bad feelings between the U.S. and many European nations? (interpretive)
9. In the years following WWI, how did workers attempt to improve their economic position? (interpretive)
10. What events and issues indicated a conflict between urban and rural Americans in the 1920's? (interpretive)
11. What events or situations illustrated ethnic conflicts in American society? (interpretive)
12. What conditions led to the stock market crash in 1929? (literal)

Part III: Vocabulary Study—Section One, pages 458-462

Activity: The students are given a list of words and terms from this section of the chapter. The definitions are provided.

Directions: The teacher reviews the words and terms with the class before giving the reading assignment.

Part IV: Vocabulary Study—Section Two, pages 462-468

Activity: The students are given a list of words and terms from this section of the chapter. They are to look up the definitions.

Directions: The students look up the definitions before reading the assignment. The teacher may choose to review the words prior to reading.

Activity: The students are given a list of names and terms to be identified after reading the section.

Directions: The students look up the definitions to the terms after they read the selection.

Part V: Vocabulary Study—Section Three, pages 468-472

Activity: The students are given a list of names and terms and asked to look up definitions for words 1-10 before reading. Then they are to identify terms 11-22 after reading the section.
Directions: Look up the definitions for words 1-10 before reading. Then identify terms 11-22 after reading the section.

Part VI: Vocabulary Study—Section Four, pages 472-477

Activity: The students are given a list of words and definitions for numbers 1-9 and asked to review them before reading. Then after they have read the section they are to fill in the blanks using words and terms 10-21.

Directions: Study the list of words and definitions for 1-9 before reading the section. Then using words and terms 10-21, fill in the blanks below after you read.

Skill Building Exercises

Directions: After the students have completed the vocabulary and identification exercises and read the chapter, they are to complete the following exercises.

Sequence: List the events in the order in which they took place.

1. Teapot Dome Scandal
2. Soft-coal industry strike
3. Demobilization effort
4. Emergency Quota Act
5. President Harding's death
6. Passage of the Hawley-Smoot Tariff
7. Repeal of the 18th Amendment
8. Stock Market Crash
9. Russian Revolution
10. Ratification of the 19th Amendment
11. President Hoover's election
12. FDR took office

Cause/Effect: Identify each of the following items as either a cause or an effect.

1. Germany's failure to pay war debts
2. Stock Market Crash
3. Over-extension of credit
4. Russian Revolution
5. European nations no longer needing American farm goods
6. High American tariff (Hawley-Smoot)
7. Surplus of farm goods
8. European Allies' failure to pay war debts to U.S.
9. Over-production of industrial products
10. Resentment of U.S. insistence of repayment of war debts
11. Red Scare
12. Depression

Making a Chart: Using the information from the previous exercise, make a chart listing each cause with its effect. Each item may be used more than once and in both categories.

Inferences: Multiple Choice: Select the correct statement to complete the thought.

1. The immigration laws of the 1920's set quotas favoring countries in northwestern Europe. Therefore, it could be said that Americans:
   A. wanted to give all people a chance to immigrate
   B. felt people from southern and eastern Europe and the Orient were less desirable
   C. wanted to increase the population
   D. wanted to alienate foreigners

2. During the 1920's the KKK declared a private war on foreigners, blacks, Jews, and Catholics. Therefore, it could be said that the KKK favored:
   A. minority groups
   B. southerners
   C. white Protestants
   D. Democrats

3. The Hawley-Smoot Tariff was extremely high and was passed in an effort to reduce the importation of foreign goods. Therefore, it could be said that the Hawley-Smoot Tariff was a device to:
   A. benefit the farmer
   B. to benefit American industry
   C. to help the Allies pay back their war debts
   D. to prevent the importation of inferior goods

4. America's refusal to join the League of Nations meant:
   A. Americans did not favor world peace
   B. Americans did not want to take an active role in world politics
   C. Americans were looking to Europe for leadership
   D. Americans were interested in strengthening foreign ties.

5. President Hoover's refusal to use federal money to
give direct relief to the unemployed meant:

A. he favored government control
B. he hated poor people
C. he favored less federal involvement
D. he thought people should work for a living

Reading and Interpreting Graphic Information: Using the information on page 467, answer the following questions:

1. What percentage of the popular vote was received by the Republican Party in the 1920 Presidential election? (literal)
2. Who was the Democratic candidate for President in 1920? (literal)
3. What percentage of the popular vote was received by the Progressive Party in 1924? (literal)
4. What state's electoral votes went to the Progressive candidate, Robert LaFollette, in 1924? (literal)
5. Who was the Republican candidate for President in 1928? (literal)
6. How many electoral votes went to the Democratic candidate in 1928? (literal)
7. Who was the Democratic candidate in 1932? (literal)
8. Which states' electoral votes went to Hoover in 1932? (literal)
9. In which election was the largest amount of the popular vote received by the Republicans? (literal)
10. In which election was the largest amount of popular votes received by one candidate? Who was that candidate? (literal)

Short Answer: How do you account for the change in voting patterns from 1920 to 1932? (What caused the country to switch support from Republican to Democratic?) (interpretive)

Essay Questions: After reading the text, answer the thought questions that were presented at the beginning of the lesson. Also, include the following question:

13. Given the information in the chapter, do you think that the Great Depression could have been avoided, or was it inevitable? If it could have been avoided, what could have been done to avoid it? (Evaluative)
included for students with particular reading problems. The lesson material described above includes all the necessary components for good reading instruction in the content area: 1. Review and motivational exercise, 2. setting the purpose for reading, 3. vocabulary study, 4. skill-building exercises including closure through conclusion drawing and evaluation.
Chapter 20—"Postwar Politics"—1921-1932

Directions: As you are reading Chapter 20, look for answers to the following questions:

1. What was the American attitude toward "labor" following WWI?
2. How were civil liberties threatened during the Red Scare?
3. Against which groups did the quota system discriminate?
4. In what way was the Harding administration involved in scandal?
5. Against which groups were the actions of the KKK directed in the 1920's?
6. Why was prohibition hard to enforce?
7. Why did Hoover oppose using federal money for relief to the unemployed?
8. Why did the issue of war debts lead to bad feelings between the U.S. and many European nations?
9. In the years following World War I, how did workers attempt to improve their economic position?
10. What events and issues indicated a conflict between urban and rural Americans in the 1920's?
11. What events or situations illustrated ethnic conflicts in American society?
12. What conditions led to the stock market crash in 1929?

Vocabulary Study: Section One, pages 458-462

Directions: Study the following list of words and definitions before you read the first section.

1. Prosperity—well being, sufficiently cared for, sufficient wealth
2. Demobilization—to return the military and means of production to peace time conditions
3. Strike—a refusal to work
4. Strikebreakers—workers who go ahead and work when a strike has been called
5. Injunction—a legal order to return to work
6. Bolsheviks—Russian political party (Communists)
7. Red Scare—a time when people were overly concerned with the take over of communism
8. NAACP—The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, an organization founded to help blacks
9. Suffragists—women who campaigned to get the vote for women
10. Enfranchised—given the right to do something (vote)
11. "Ohio gang"—President Harding's supporters
12. Teapot Dome—a federal reserve in Wyoming secretly leased to an oil company by one of Harding's cabinet members, Albert Fall
13. "Golden Twenties"—term used to refer to the 1920's because of the apparent prosperity
14. Proletariat—Marxist term for the working class
15. Ku Klux Klan—reactionary organization against blacks, Catholics, Jews, and immigrants
16. Negotiation—bargaining to reach an agreement
17. Revolution—an up-rising against government
18. Corruption—that which is evil or wrong
19. Propaganda—the spreading of ideas or doctrines
20. Armisice—a temporary stopping of warfare
21. Interstate Commerce Commission—an organization that regulates trade between states
22. Federal Power Commission—an organization that had power to license construction and operation of dams on rivers in government lands
23. John L. Lewis—president of the United Mine Workers
24. A. Mitchell Palmer—Attorney General during the United Mine Workers' strike
25. Marcus Garvey—founded the Universal Negro improvement Association, wanted to set up an African state for American blacks
26. Carrie Chapman Catt—a woman who was instrumental in the fight for women's suffrage
27. Warren G. Harding—President of the U.S. from 1920-1923
28. Harry M. Daugherty—Attorney General under Harding
29. Albert B. Fall—Secretary of the Interior under Harding
30. Andrew Mellon—Secretary of the Treasury under Harding
31. Herbert Hoover—President of the U.S. from 1928-1932
33. Harry F. Sinclair—an executive for the Mammoth Oil Company involved in the Teapot Dome scandal

Vocabulary Study: Section Two, pages 458-462

Directions: Before reading the second section, look up the definitions for the following words and terms:

1. Radical
2. Intolerance
3. Aliens
4. Conservative
5. Veto
6. Immigration
7. Anarchists
8. Circumstantial evidence
9. Bigotry
10. Inflation
11. Subversives
12. Calvin Collidge
13. John W. Davis
14. Robert LaFollette
15. McNary-Haugan Bill
16. Emergency Quota Act of 1924
17. "Anglo-Saxon Protestant America"
18. Al Smith

Vocabulary Study: Section Three, pages 468-472

Directions: Look up the definitions for words 1-10 before reading the section. Then identify terms 11-24 after reading the section.

1. Repeal
2. Inagurate
3. Surpluses
4. Tariff
5. Depression
6. Margin
7. Humanitarian
8. Prohibition
9. Nationalism
10. Capitalism
11. Bootleggers and rumrunners
12. "Wets"
13. Eighteenth Amendment
14. "Noble Experiment"
15. Federal Farm Board
16. Hawley-Smoot Tariff
17. "Black Thursday"
18. New York Stock Exchange
20. Reconstruction Finance Corporation
22. "Bonus Army"
23. Karl Marx
24. "Gentlemen's agreement"

Vocabulary Study: Section Four, pages 472-477

Directions: Study the list of words and definitions for
1-9 before reading the section. Then using words and terms 10-21, fill in the blanks below after you read.

1. Isolation—a policy of not becoming involved with other nations
2. Disarmament—the reduction of armed forces and weapons
3. Alienate—to make unfriendly
4. Intervention—an interference in the affairs of others
5. Debtor—one who owes a bill
6. Creditor—one who extends credit (loans)
7. Reparations—making up for wrong doing, payments for causing war
8. Default—failure to make a payment on a debt
9. Repudiate—to refuse to acknowledge
10. Nine-Poser Open Door Treaty
11. League of Nations
12. Kellogg-Briand Pact
13. General Chiang Kai-shek
14. Sun Yat-sen
15. Soviets
16. Henry Stimson
17. Manchukuo
18. Monroe Doctrine
19. Roosevelt Corollary
20. Dollar Diplomacy
21. Territorial integrity

1. The Japanese invaded Manchuria and renamed it ______
   ________.

2. The ____________ was an organization that supported world peace.

3. ____________, the U.S. Secretary of State, refused to recognize Japan's illegal gains in China.

4. The leader of the Chinese revolution was ____________
   ____________.

5. The purpose of the ____________ was to encourage nations to settle disputes peacefully.

6. ____________ was the founder of the Chinese Nationalist Party.

7. A nation's right to run its own affairs could be called ____________________.

8. The policy of investing heavily in Latin American countries came to be known as ________________.
9. After the Russian Revolution, the people living in that country came to be known as ________________.

10. Official policy regarding the United States' attitude toward European colonization in Latin America was known as the _________________.

11. The _________________ was an effort to respect China's independence.

12. The _______________ to the Monroe Doctrine justified American interference in Latin American affairs.

Skill Building Exercises

Sequence

Directions: After completing the vocabulary exercises and reading the chapter list the following events in the order in which they took place.

1. Teapot Dome Scandal
2. Soft-coal industry strike
3. Demobilization effort
4. Emergency Quota Act
5. President Harding's death
6. Passage of the Hawley-Smoot Tariff
7. Repeal of the 18th Amendment
8. Stock Market Crash
9. Russian Revolution
10. Ratification of the 19th Amendment
11. President Hoover's election
12. FDR took office

Making a Chart

Directions: Using the information from the previous exercise, make a chart listing each cause with its effect. Each item may be used more than once and in both categories.

Inferences

Directions: Multiple Choice: Select the correct statement to complete the thought.

1. The immigration laws of the 1920's set quotas favoring countries in northwestern Europe. Therefore, it
could be said the Americans:
A. wanted to give all people a chance to immigrate
B. felt people from southern and eastern Europe and the Orient were less desirable
C. wanted to increase the population
D. wanted to alienate foreigners

2. During the 1920's the KKK declared a private war on foreigners, blacks, Jews, and Catholics. Therefore, it could be said that the KKK favored:
A. minority groups
B. southerners
C. white Protestants
D. Democrats

3. The Hawley-Smoot Tariff was extremely high and was passed in an effort to reduce the importation of foreign goods. Therefore, it could be said that the Hawley-Smoot Tariff was a device to:
A. benefit the farmer
B. to benefit American industry
C. to help the Allies pay back their war debts
D. to prevent the importation of inferior goods

4. America's refusal to join the League of Nations meant:
A. Americans did not favor world peace
B. Americans did not want to take an active role in world politics
C. Americans were looking to Europe for leadership
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5. President Hoover's refusal to use federal money to give direct relief to the unemployed meant:
A. he favored governmental control
B. he hated poor people
C. he favored less federal involvement
D. he thought people should work for a living

Reading and Interpreting Graphic Information
Directions: Using the information on page 467, answer the following questions:
1. What percentage of the popular vote was received by the Republican Party in the 1920 Presidential election?

2. Who was the Democratic candidate for President in 1920?

3. What percentage of the popular vote was received by the Progressive Party in 1924?

4. What state's electoral votes went to the Progressive candidate, Robert LaFollette, in 1924? (You may need to look at the U.S. map in the back of the text).

5. Who was the Republican candidate for President in 1928?

6. How many electoral votes went to the Democratic candidate in 1928?

7. Who was the Democratic candidate in 1932?

8. Which state's electoral votes went to Hoover in 1932?

9. In which election was the largest amount of the popular vote received by the Republicans?

10. In which election was the largest amount of popular votes received by one candidate? Who was the candidate?

Short Answer: How do you account for the change in voting patterns from 1920 to 1932? (What caused the country to switch support from Republican to Democratic?)

Essay Questions

Directions: After reading the text, answer the thought questions that were presented at the beginning of the lesson. Also, include the following question:

13. Given the information in the chapter, do you think that the Great Depression could have been avoided, or was it inevitable? If it could have been avoided, what could have been done to avoid it? Be sure to use examples from the chapter to illustrate your conclusions.
The teacher may wish to review the following list of words with any students who may have difficulty reading the chapter.

1. Merit—to deserve
2. Safeguarded—protected
3. Hydroelectric—electric energy produced by water
4. Wretched—terrible
5. Diverting—to direct away from something
6. Concession—a thing that has been conceded
7. Grievances—complaints
8. Ultimately—eventually
9. Conformity—to be alike
10. Intolerance—unable to tolerate
11. Provoking—irritating
12. Intensive—exhaustive
13. Distributed—to give out
14. Denounced—to condemn
15. Subversives—those who intend to overthrow the government
16. Suppressed—to keep back
17. Restrictive—placing limits on
18. Expelled—to throw out
19. Exaggerated—overstated
20. Status—place, position
21. Revived—to bring back
22. Maimed—hurt, harmed
23. Defraud—to cheat
24. Deported—sent away
25. Alienate—to turn away from
26. Ratified—approved
27. Nomination—to be named as a candidate
28. Cronies—buddies
29. Presided—to be in charge
30. Dignity—degree of worth or honor
31. Suspicious—to suspect something is wrong
32. Acquitted—declared innocent
33. Revelations—to reveal secrets
34. Mourned—to express sorrow
35. Betrayed—to turn against
36. Tremendous—extreme
37. Distress—state of trouble
38. Persisted-to continue
39. Unrestricted-with no limits
40. Access-the right to enter
41. Hostility-expression of dislike
42. Radicals-extremists
43. Evident-obvious
44. Contempt-dislike, hatred
45. Sinister-evil
46. Brutal-cruel
47. Outrages-violent acts
48. Prevented-kept from doing something
49. Condemning-denouncing
50. Disillusioned-disencharnted
51. Repeal-to take back
52. Previous-one that came before
53. Vile-evil
54. Circulated-passed around
55. Efficiency-to produce an effect with little waste
56. Compromises-concessions made by both sides
57. Resented-to hold bad feelings toward something or someone
58. Invasion-an intrusion
59. Enforcement-to uphold
60. Appropriated-to set aside for a specific use
61. Documented-to provide proof
62. Redeem-to fulfill
63. Cooperative-joint agreement
64. Drastically-in an extreme manner
65. Pleaded-begged
66. Exporters-those who send goods out
67. Retaliated-to do in turn
68. Speculation-to take a chance, gamble
69. Devastating-destroying
70. Frenzied-frantic
71. Bolster-to build up
72. Optimistic-the hopeful or cheerful side
73. Disastrous-terrible
74. Contributing-partially responsible
75. Inevitable-cannot be avoided
76. Capacity-amount that can be contained or produced
77. Resources-something that lies ready for use
78. Charities-organizations that give aid
79. Self-reliance-dependence on oneself
80. Accustomed-used to something
81. Initiative-motivation
82. Confirm-to make valid
83. Impression-image
84. Evicted-thrown out
85. Dispute-argument
86. Alliance-agreement
87. Delegates-representatives
88. Rejected-denied
89. Pacts-agreements
90. Spurning-refusing to join or accept
91. Renounce-to cast off
92. Extended-to continue
93. Violate-to break an agreement
94. Aroused-to bring out or cause
95. Invaded-intruded
96. Province-territory, state
97. Enforcer-one who upholds
98. Covenant-agreement
99. Condemnation-to denounce
100. Nonrecognition-refusal to acknowledge
103. Exploit-to take advantage of
104. Dominate-to control
105. Indicated-showed
106. Memorandum-written note
107. Repudiated-refusal to acknowledge
108. Predecessors-those who came before
109. Denounced-condemned
110. Evacuation-to take out
APPENDIX

CRANE'S THESIS PAPER

EXTRA 100% RAG
The 1920’s are often regarded as a time of gaiety sandwiched in between a bloody war and a brutal depression. Called the “golden twenties” because many people experienced a prosperity they had never known before, the decade was also a time of bigotry and agricultural poverty.

The years will probably always be best remembered for their lighter side—the flagpole-sitting contests and the dance marathons, the easy money and the bathtub gin. But the serious events merit attention. People throughout the world struggled with problems of war and peace, of poverty and prosperity.

DEMOBILIZATION

In 1919 the people of the United States were eager to forget the war. Immediately after the armistice, the government began bringing American soldiers back from France. In addition, it gave relief to the starving people in Europe and prepared to end the war program at home.

The Esch-Cummins Transportation Act (1920) returned control of the railroads to their private owners. It also enlarged the powers of the Interstate Commerce Commission so that the government had control over rates, profits, and other aspects of operating the lines.

The General Leasing Act of 1920 reserved oil lands for the navy, beyond the reach of oil companies. It also permitted the government to lease oil and mineral lands on terms that safeguarded the public interest. The Water Power Act (1920) set up the Federal Power Commission. It was given authority to license the construction and operation of dams and hydroelectric plants on rivers in government lands. The commission was also authorized to regulate rates. The Merchant Marine Act (1920) allowed the government to sell some of its ships to private operators.
Striking Workers

During the war, the wage rates of many workers had been frozen. After the conflict, business interests in the United States were in no mood to meet labor’s demands for higher wages without a fight. They wanted to run their businesses as they saw fit. Some leaders believed that the workers’ struggle for higher wages was the first stage of the class revolution plotted by Communists. They persuaded other Americans to believe so as well.

Public hostility toward organized labor was apparent in the steel strike of September 1919. Working conditions in the steel industry, as in many others, were wretched. The average work week for the entire industry was just under sixty-nine hours. The American Federation of Labor had easily organized many of the workers. When the United States Steel Corporation refused to negotiate with the union, the workers went on strike.

The steel company succeeded in diverting public attention away from the real issues by claiming that the labor leaders were Communists. Popular opinion then became so hostile toward the strikers that they could not hope to win. Although the strike dragged on until January 1920, the company had won out earlier with the use of thousands of strikebreakers. The workers did not gain a single concession.

In November 1919, about 394,000 miners in the soft-coal industry left their jobs. They were led by John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers. The miners went on strike even though Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer had obtained an injunction, or court order, prohibiting leaders of the union from participating in the strike. Like many other industrial workers, the miners had major grievances. They had agreed not to strike during the war. For two years they had not received a wage increase, even though the cost of living had doubled.

When a second injunction was issued, Lewis finally canceled the strike. Many miners still refused to return to work. President Wilson stepped in and promised a wage increase as well as a commission to investigate the workers’ demands. The coal strike ended, and the miners ultimately received a wage increase of 27 percent.

The Red Scare

The wartime demands for conformity in thought and the intolerance against foreigners spilled over into peacetime. One result was the hunt for radicals—called the Red Scare of 1919-1920.

Although the Red Scare was rooted in American problems, it was also connected with events in Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. The Bolsheviks, or Communists, preached the idea of worldwide revolution by the proletariat, the working people. The Communists dedicated themselves to provoking class warfare in which workers would turn on their employers, seize private property, and take over the government.

Most Americans apparently were shocked by Bolshevik activities and the spread of communism. They were further upset when two Communist parties were formed in the United States in September 1919. The American Communists carried on an intensive propaganda campaign. They paraded, made speeches, distributed pamphlets, and demanded violent action to overthrow the capitalist system.

Many Americans denounced the Communists as foreigners and subversives. Business leaders and conservatives in general were alarmed, for they took seriously the threat of revolution. Strikes, bombings, and even the increasing inflation were seen as attacks by radicals on the foundations of American society.

In November 1919, Attorney General Palmer began a series of raids against Com-
munists and other radicals. On January 2, 1920, agents of the Department of Justice, at Palmer’s direction, raided Communist headquarters in thirty-three major cities in twenty-three states. In this one great round-up, more than 2,700 persons were hustled off to jails. Most of the people arrested during the Red Scare were released because they had committed no crime, but several hundred aliens were deported.

State officials, too, suppressed civil liberties. Many state legislatures passed restrictive laws designed to punish radicals. In April 1920, the New York legislature expelled five legally elected members because they were Socialists. After this act of intolerance, the Red Scare declined. Many Americans seemed to realize that the radical danger had been exaggerated.

Racial Violence

During World War I, hundreds of thousands of black people had left farms in the South for jobs in northern cities. Although they gained greater social and economic freedom than they had previously known, black people faced prejudice, stiff competition for jobs, and slum living as bad as or worse than that of immigrants. Some 400,000 blacks had served in the army, half of them in Europe. There they had experienced a social freedom they had not known in the United States.

After the war, blacks tried to break down some of the barriers that had kept them at the bottom of American society. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) worked for a number of changes.

Many southern whites opposed this activity and tried to keep blacks in their old status. They revived the Ku Klux Klan. By 1919, it had grown from a small group to an organization with 100,000 members. In many southern communities, night-riding Klansmen terrorized victims, most of whom were black people. Lynchings of blacks increased and even included some men still in uniform.

In the North, as blacks moved closer to white neighborhoods, resentment exploded. Race riots broke out in twenty-six towns and cities, including Washington, D.C., and Chicago. Before 1919 was over, hundreds were dead or maimed from the riots, and millions of dollars’ worth of property was destroyed.

During the war, a new leader had appeared who held out hope for a better life. Marcus Aurelius Garvey, a Jamaican immigrant, founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association. Working from the Harlem district of New York City, Garvey preached black nationalism and black pride. Follow me back to Africa, he said, and build a “free, redeemed and mighty nation.”

By 1921, more than 4 million black people were paying dues to Garvey’s organization.
He gathered millions of dollars to buy ships to carry his followers to Africa, but the project never materialized. In 1923, a federal court convicted Garvey of using the mails to defraud. He was sent to prison and was later deported.

Victory of the Suffragists

During the war, the National American Woman Suffrage Association and other groups kept up the pressure for a federal women's suffrage amendment. In 1917, seven more states gave women the vote. Success bred more success as political leaders sensed that women's suffrage was inevitable and that they would be unwise to alienate future voters.

Finally in 1918, Congress agreed to consider the proposed amendment. The amendment passed in the House with exactly the number of votes needed to win. But it took another year and a half to get the measure through the Senate. Still the battle was not over, for the amendment had to be ratified by the states. Thousands of women poured their energies into struggles to get the state legislatures to pass the amendment. Finally, on August 26, 1920, Tennessee ratified the amendment, by a two-vote margin, and the battle was won.

In 1923, Carrie Chapman Catt, who had led the 2 million members of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, summed up the effort that it had taken to win the Nineteenth Amendment:

To get the word "male" in effect out of the Constitution cost the women of the country fifty-two years of ceaseless campaign... During that time they were forced to conduct fifty-six campaigns of referenda to male voters; 480 campaigns to get Legislatures to submit suffrage amendments to voters; 47 campaigns to get State constitutional conventions to write woman suffrage into state constitutions; 277 campaigns to get State party conventions to include woman suffrage planks; 30 campaigns to get presidential party conventions to adopt woman suffrage planks in party platforms, and 19 campaigns with 19 successive Congresses.

As the historian Eleanor Flexner comments, the forces against women's suffrage had "caused far more delay and difficulty than one would ever imagine from reading the usual phrase in the history books, announcing that American women were enfranchised after World War I."
Scandals in Government

President Warren G. Harding was kindly, friendly, and well liked by almost everybody who knew him, but he had no will power. Although he did not want to be President, he gave in to pressure from friends and political bosses to accept the Republican nomination. His administration was remembered as much for scandal as for any accomplishment.

Harding surrounded himself with old cronies, who became known as the “Ohio gang.” They catered to his tastes but deceived him. He rewarded the leader of the Ohio gang, Harry M. Daugherty, with the post of attorney general. He gave another friend, Albert B. Fall of New Mexico, the job of secretary of the interior. Neither man was suited for his office.

Not all of Harding’s appointments were bad, however. He had obtained three able and intelligent men in Charles Evans Hughes, secretary of state; Andrew Mellon, secretary of the treasury; and Herbert Hoover, secretary of commerce. They set the tone for the administration because Harding seldom made policy decisions on his own. He presided over government with outward dignity but left policy making to his cabinet members and to Congress.

Soon after Albert B. Fall took over as secretary of the interior, he persuaded the secretary of the navy to transfer to the Department of the Interior control over oil lands held in reserve to meet the future needs of the navy. Even though a few of the navy’s oil experts protested, the President agreed to the transfer. Fall then secretly leased the reserve at Elk Hills, California, to Edward L. Doheny of the Pan American Petroleum Company, and the reserve at Teapot Dome, Wyoming, to Harry F. Sinclair of the Mammoth Oil Company. For these favors Sinclair gave Fall over $200,000 in government bonds, $85,000 in cash, and other presents. Doheny gave the secretary a “loan” of $100,000.

When Fall began spending this wealth, some senators became suspicious and investigated. Eventually the story was uncovered. In 1924, Doheny, Sinclair, and Fall were tried for conspiracy to defraud the government. All were acquitted. In 1929, Fall was convicted of taking a bribe, fined $100,000, and sentenced to a year in prison. Sinclair was fined $1,000 and served nine months in jail for tampering with the jury and for defying a Senate committee, but neither he nor Doheny was convicted of paying bribes.

Attorney General Daugherty also disgraced the Harding administration. Senate investigators in 1924 found that he had sold liquor permits and pardons. He was forced to resign from office and, in 1927, was brought to trial for fraud. In court, Daugherty refused to testify and implied that he chose to remain silent rather than make revelations that might injure Harding’s reputation. The jury failed to agree on Daugherty’s guilt or innocence, and he went free.

In June 1923, as rumors of corruption in government had begun to spread, Harding had begun a speaking tour of the West. He became ill while returning from an Alaska vacation. On August 2 he suffered a stroke and died. Not yet knowing of the scandals, the people of the nation mourned him for the kindly man he was and for the statesman they believed him to be.

Harding suspected that corruption had eaten into his administration. Before he started his trip he told a friend, “In this job I am not worried about my enemies. It is my friends that are keeping me awake nights.” His friends had betrayed him to such an extent that his reputation was destroyed.

PROSPERITY AND PROBLEMS

On the night of Harding’s death, Vice-President Calvin Coolidge was at his father’s home near Plymouth, Vermont. In the little
living room at 2:47 A.M., with his hand on the open family Bible, Coolidge took the presidential oath. His father, a notary public, administered the oath by the light of kerosene lamps.

This rural scene had tremendous appeal. To many people in the United States it suggested another chapter in the American dream. Another country boy had risen to occupy the White House.

Although Calvin Coolidge had not been poor, he had come from the country, and his career was that of a small-town politician who made good. Coolidge fitted the times. He was a conservative in almost everything. He favored legislation beneficial to big business because he believed business should run the country.

Coolidge was shy, and it was difficult for him to make friends. He spoke so seldom that he became known as "Silent Cal." Yet people liked his folksy virtues. He had the qualities the Ohio gang lacked, namely old-fashioned honesty and simplicity.

Business leaders controlled the Republican convention of 1924. They gave Coolidge the nomination and framed a platform that promised to continue things as they were.

The Democrats were badly divided. At their convention the urban and rural wings of the party could not agree on a presidential candidate. Finally, on the 103rd ballot, the Democrats nominated John W. Davis, a corporation lawyer who was as conservative as Coolidge.

Rebellious Republicans, labor leaders, and reformers organized a new Progressive party for the presidential campaign only. Their convention chose Robert M. La Follette to head the ticket. These Progressives gained most of their support from western farmers, organized labor, and socialists. La Follette received nearly 5 million votes, a substantial number for a third party, but he carried only the state of Wisconsin.

Farmers' Problems

During the war, many farmers had made money, and they had spent it as though their prosperity would continue. Their prosperity ended in 1920, when foreign countries cut down on their purchases of American wheat, meat, and other products, and the federal government withdrew support for the price of wheat. Farmers now had an output that exceeded demand. An agricultural depression began that summer in large areas of the country and lasted all during the 1920's.

Midwestern Republicans and southern Democrats formed a farm bloc in Congress to combat the economic crisis. The farm bloc helped gain high tariff protection for agricultural products. The Intermediate Credits Act of 1923 gave government loans to growers of livestock. Yet the farm distress persisted.

Beginning in 1924, farmers supported the McNary-Haugen bill, which included a plan for government aid to agriculture. This plan
Passage of the prohibition amendment did not end some people's thirst for alcoholic beverages. The sale of "bath-tub gin" in "speakeasies"—illegal bars—flourished. Agents of the treasury department tried to break up illegal distilling operations and to shut down speakeasies. Left: Two male prohibition agents model their disguises. Right: John Held's cartoon "The Talkie" captures the busy mood of a Hollywood movie set.

would establish a system whereby farm products would be sold at two prices—a low world price and a higher price in the United States. The government would buy the farm surpluses at the American price, sell them abroad at the world price, and recover its losses through a special tax on farmers.

The McNary-Haugen bill was passed by Congress in revised form in 1927 and 1928. Coolidge vetoed it both times. Although organized farmers gained a number of benefits from the government, they failed to get their most important measure. They failed primarily because the President and big business interests in the East opposed the bill.

Restricting Immigration

Many Americans were no longer willing to allow unrestricted immigration into the United States. Organized labor wanted to shut off immigration in order to keep newcomers from competing for the available jobs. Many Protestants resented the influx of Catholics and Jews from southern and eastern Europe. Even employers now favored restrictions because they believed that many of the new immigrants were radicals.

Pressure from these groups led to the passage of the Emergency Quota Act in May 1921 and the National Origins Act of 1924. The 1921 law created a quota system by which the number of immigrants allowed from a given nation was based on the number of persons of that nationality living in the United States in the base year, 1910. The 1924 law changed the base year from 1910 to 1890. It favored northwestern Europeans over the southern and eastern, because a larger percentage of persons of northwestern European descent lived in the United States in 1890 than in 1910. Most Asians were completely barred, but immigrants from Latin America and Canada still had fairly free access to the United States.
The effect of the two immigration laws was discrimination, as well as restriction of immigration, became a national policy.

Intolerance

Hostility toward foreigners and fear of radicals was also evident in a murder case that stirred deep emotions during most of the 1920's. In April 1920, two men in South Braintree, Massachusetts, killed and robbed a factory paymaster and his guard. Nicola Sacco, an employee in a shoe factory, and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, a fish peddler, were tried and convicted of the murder. Both men were Italian aliens and both were anarchists. Webster Thayer, the trial judge, publicly expressed contempt for anarchism. Since the evidence against Sacco and Vanzetti was circumstantial, many people believed that they had been judged guilty primarily because they were foreigners and radicals.

This belief, accompanied by protests all over the world against the decision, led to a special investigation of the case. The investigators said the judge had acted improperly, but they did not recommend a new trial. In August 1927, Sacco and Vanzetti died in the electric chair.

An even more sinister sign of bigotry in American life was the rapid growth of the Ku Klux Klan. After 1920, the Klan spread from the South to other parts of the country, particularly to the small towns of the Midwest and the Far West. By the end of 1924, it probably had 4 or 5 million members.

Proclaiming itself the protector of "Anglo-Saxon" Protestant America, the Klan waged illegal war on foreigners, blacks, Jews, and especially Roman Catholics. Its members wore their hoods and white sheets on brutal raids in which victims were beaten and sometimes murdered. The Klansmen announced their outrages by burning crosses.

In 1924, the political influence of the Klan was so great that it prevented the Democratic national convention from condemning its activities and caused a serious split in the party. In the following year a scandal exposed Indiana Klan leaders as immoral, dishonest, and corrupt. This disillusioned many of the rank-and-file members. By the end of the 1920's, this lawless organization had lost much of its influence.

The Election of 1928

Even though the Ku Klux Klan had declined, the spirit of intolerance remained. It affected the election of 1928. The difficulty began when the Democrats nominated Alfred E. "Al" Smith, four times governor of New York, for the presidency.

Smith represented something new in national politics. Never before had either of the two major parties nominated such a person. He was a Catholic with an immigrant background and a limited education. Reared on New York City's East Side, Smith was a "wet" who sought repeal of prohibition.

Calvin Coolidge could have had the Republican nomination, but he announced that he did not choose to run. The Republicans nominated Herbert Hoover, the secretary of commerce, who had served in the cabinet of the last two previous administrations.

Hoover campaigned on a conservative platform that avoided important issues and promised continuing prosperity. Three other issues also dominated the campaign—Smith's religion, his big-city background, and his opposition to prohibition. Everywhere, the people who feared Roman Catholicism attacked him. In the South the opposition to him became almost a crusade. Vile stories about him were whispered or circulated on crude handbills. In Oklahoma City, where Smith denounced the Ku Klux Klan, fiery crosses greeted him.

So great was the opposition to Smith that Hoover won by a landslide. He even broke the Solid South, the first Republican to do so.
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS: 1920-1932

CANDIDATES: 1920

ELECTORAL VOTE BY STATE

REPUBLICAN
Warren G. Harding 404

DEMOCRATIC
James M. Cox 127

MINOR PARTIES —

531

POPULAR VOTE AND PERCENTAGE

16,143,407

9,130,328

1,454,333

26,728,068

CANDIDATES: 1924

ELECTORAL VOTE BY STATE

REPUBLICAN
Calvin Coolidge 382

DEMOCRATIC
John W. Davis 136

PROGRESSIVE
Robert M. La Follette 13

MINOR PARTIES —

531

POPULAR VOTE AND PERCENTAGE

15,718,211

8,385,283

4,831,289

29,089,084

CANDIDATES: 1928

ELECTORAL VOTE BY STATE

REPUBLICAN
Herbert C. Hoover 444

DEMOCRATIC
Alfred E. Smith 87

MINOR PARTIES —

531

POPULAR VOTE AND PERCENTAGE

21,391,993

15,016,169

36,738,887

CANDIDATES: 1932

ELECTORAL VOTE BY STATE

DEMOCRATIC
Franklin D. Roosevelt 472

REPUBLICAN
Herbert C. Hoover 59

MINOR PARTIES —

531

POPULAR VOTE AND PERCENTAGE

22,809,638

15,758,901

39,721,845
since the Reconstruction period. Probably no Democrat could have won, for the people were satisfied with Republican prosperity. Yet prejudice had marred the election and left an ugly wound in American society, one that would heal slowly.

HEADING FOR A FALL

As a poor orphan boy from the country who achieved wealth, fame, and power, Herbert Hoover seemed to fulfill the American dream. He was born in the small town of West Branch, Iowa, in 1874. He worked for his education at Stanford University and then became a mining engineer. His profession took him over most of the world—to Australia, Asia, Africa, and Europe. In 1914, he claimed that he was probably the wealthiest of American engineers. After wealth came fame, particularly as chairman of the Commission for Relief in Belgium, where he became known as a great humanitarian. Then followed his appointment as Wilson’s food administrator and eight years as secretary of commerce.

Hoover believed in efficiency and service in government and strongly distrusted the spread of governmental power. The presidency was Hoover’s first elective office, and he lacked political experience. He found it difficult to make the compromises demanded of a politician.

Prohibition

Prohibition had been a bitter issue in the election campaign. Protestant rural America favored it. Prohibitionists believed that drinking was a vice of immigrants and corrupt city dwellers. But many people who lived in the cities and industrial areas, where the drinking of liquor, wine, or beer was an accepted social custom, resented the Eighteenth Amendment as an invasion of their personal liberty.

Members of the Ku Klux Klan parade down a New Jersey street. The Klan, revived in 1915, recruited members North and South. Its antiforeigner stand appealed to isolationist Americans after World War I.

People who wanted to drink did so regardless of the Constitution. Bootleggers and rumrunners defied the law and furnished a steady supply of alcohol to the “wets.” Criminals, many of them organized on a scale previously unknown, reaped untold profits from selling illegal liquor.

Enforcement of nationwide prohibition might have been possible if most people had supported it. But by law, the federal, state, and local governments were all responsible for enforcement. In “wet” areas the local authorities did nothing and left enforcement to the federal government. And Congress never appropriated enough money to do the job properly.

By 1928, enforcement of prohibition had become a joke. Shortly after Hoover entered the White House he appointed a commission, headed by former Attorney General George W. Wickersham, to investigate the problems of enforcement. Two years later, in January 1931, the Wickersham Commission gave its report. It documented what most Americans already knew—that prohibition was a failure. Yet the commission suggested no plan for attacking the problem.

Hoover strengthened the federal government’s machinery for enforcement and did a better job than had Harding and Coolidge, but he too failed. His task actually became more difficult as opposition to prohibition grew. Finally, in August 1932, he announced that he favored repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment. Since the Democratic platform of that year had also come out for repeal, prohibition was doomed.

In February 1933, Congress submitted the repeal amendment to the states. In December, the Twenty-first Amendment, which re-
pealed the Eighteenth Amendment, became law. The “noble experiment” was over.

The Hawley-Smoot Tariff

When Hoover was inaugurated, many Americans were enjoying a booming prosperity. During the campaign, Hoover had promised help to the farmers, most of whom were not well off. To redeem his promise, Hoover called Congress into special session to pass laws to help farmers.

In June 1929, Congress passed the Agricultural Marketing Act to give aid to farmers through their own cooperative marketing organizations. This law set up the Federal Farm Board, which made loans to cooperative associations so that they could store and sell agricultural surpluses. In 1930, after the outbreak of a worldwide economic depression, the Farm Board created the Grain Stabilization Corporation and the Cotton Stabilization Corporation. These two agencies tried to keep prices stable by buying up surpluses, but prices fell drastically anyway. Hoover’s farm experiment had failed.

Hoover also asked Congress to give farm products the same protection it had given to manufacturers by raising the tariff on agricultural products. The Hawley-Smoot Tariff bill, passed by Congress in June 1930, did raise the tariff on farm products. But it did not help farmers much because it also raised the rates on many manufactured goods that the farmers had to buy.

People everywhere pleaded with the President not to sign the bill. More than a thou-
sand of the nation's professional economists said that it was economically unsound. Since business leaders and some farmers wanted the tariff, Hoover signed it.

The Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act, the highest peacetime tariff in the nation’s history, failed to help farmers. They actually suffered because they were exporters. Within two years, other industrial nations retaliated with tariffs of their own against United States products. The Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act stimulated the growth of economic nationalism and helped deepen the depression.

A Mighty Crash

The depression in the United States was touched off by distress in the New York Stock Exchange. For several years the prices of stocks had been rising. People bought stocks because they thought they could get rich easily. They gambled on the stock market by buying on margin, that is, buying on credit from brokers. This kind of speculation was all right only so long as stock prices continued to climb, as nearly everybody expected they would.

Outside the market there were signs that prosperity was weakening. Much of the prosperity had been founded on the construction and automobile industries. In 1925, the construction of homes had reached a value of 5 billion dollars; in 1929, the value fell to 3 billion. By 1929, too, sales of automobiles and related products had declined. Some stock operators began to quietly dispose of their holdings. In September 1929, the stock market broke and then recovered. On October 24, called “Black Thursday,” prices broke sharply, and many investors lost money. On the following day, President Hoover assured the people that what had happened was not very serious.

Then, on Tuesday, October 29, the big crash came. In a day of wild trading, a day that turned out to be the most devastating in the history of the Stock Exchange, nearly 16.5 million shares of stock exchanged hands. The frenzied selling went on for two weeks, until the value of the stocks on the Wall Street exchange had declined about 40 percent.

Leaders in government and business tried to bolster sagging spirits. When men and women everywhere were being wiped out financially, John D. Rockefeller, for example, came out with an optimistic statement. He said that the country was sound and added that “my son and I have for some days been purchasing sound common stocks.” Many people applauded Rockefeller, but Eddie Cantor, a popular comedian, commented later, “Sure, who else had any money left?”

The mighty crash on Wall Street brought the prosperity of the twenties to a disastrous end. Although the crash was not the only cause of the Great Depression that followed, it was a contributing factor.

Fighting the Depression

When the depression struck, most people in business took the view that business cycles were inevitable and that, in time, prosperity would return. Some said the economy was sound, and that the only thing wrong was the people’s lack of confidence.

No one could ignore the depression. It penetrated every aspect of life. A year after the crash, 6 million men and women in the United States walked the streets looking for jobs that did not exist. In 1931, unemployment in the nation rose to 9 million, and in 1932 it climbed to about 15 million. Thou-
sands of banks failed, prices dropped, foreign trade shrank, and more businesses failed.

By the summer of 1932, steel plants were operating at 12 percent of capacity. Many factories had shut down completely. People lost their savings. When they could not make mortgage payments, they lost their homes. Charity soup kitchens opened in the cities,
and long bread lines formed. The jobless slept where they could—on park benches or in the doorways of public buildings. Many suffered from cold and lack of food.

Hoover did not go along with those who advised him to do nothing. He used more of the resources of the government to fight the depression than did any previous President in an economic crisis. To increase business activity and help end unemployment, he stepped up federal construction of public buildings and roads.

Hoover would not go beyond this limited use of government spending. He was opposed to direct use of federal money for relief for the unemployed, believing that state and local governments and private charities should provide relief. He was afraid that Americans would lose their initiative and self-reliance if they became accustomed to turning to the federal government for aid during hard times. At first he relied on the voluntary cooperation of business, labor, and local government agencies to fight the depression. But these measures were not enough. State and local governments ran out of money, and private charities proved inadequate to care for the hungry and homeless.

Congress began to demand that Hoover abandon his reliance on voluntary measures and start some large-scale federal relief. Finally, after a panic in Europe made the depression in the United States worse, the President asked Congress to create the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) to lend money to banks, railroads, insurance companies, and other large businesses. Congress created the RFC in January 1932, and before the year was over, it had loaned 1.5 billion dollars to more than 5,000 business concerns.

Hoover followed this action with other measures, such as the Federal Home Loan Bank Act of July 1932, which saved home mortgages by giving help to building and loan associations. In the same month, however, he vetoed a bill for direct federal relief and a huge public works program. For this reason, many people believed that he was a heartless man who was willing to use government funds for big business but not for the relief of human suffering.

The President seemed to confirm that impression in his treatment of the “Bonus Army,” which gathered in Washington in the spring of 1932. About 15,000 World War I veterans had come to demand immediate payment of a bonus that Congress had authorized in 1924. (The bonus was not due to be paid until 1945.) Congress voted down a bill for immediate payment, and over half of the bonus marchers left Washington. Several thousand remained. They had no jobs, no homes, and nowhere to go. The President ordered them evicted from government property. Finally, some units of the army, under the command of General Douglas MacArthur, drove the ragged veterans away with tanks and bayonets.

To many people it seemed as if both their business-trained President and capitalism had failed. While people went hungry, granaries spilled over with wheat that no one could sell. Some Americans began to read Karl Marx with increased interest, some began flirting with radical ideas, and many were ready for a change.

SHUNNING WORLD LEADERSHIP

When World War I ended, the United States was committed to a policy of isolation. Despite that commitment, the United States in the 1920’s did not avoid all participation in world politics.
Seeking Disarmament

In 1921, President Harding and Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes, responding to the demands of Congress and the people, took steps to bring about naval disarmament among the world’s sea powers. Nine nations—the United States, Britain, Japan, France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, China, and Portugal—attended the Naval Disarmament Conference that opened in Washington in November 1921.

Resulting from this conference were three major agreements. In the Four-Power Pact, signed in December, the United States, Britain, Japan, and France agreed to respect each other’s rights and territories in the Pacific. If any dispute arose among them, they agreed that they would discuss it in a conference. This agreement replaced an alliance between Britain and Japan.

Next the United States, Britain, Japan, France, and Italy worked on the Five-Power Naval Treaty, which they signed in February 1922. This agreement stopped the construction of large warships, such as battleships and battle cruisers, for ten years and called for the destruction of some of those ships that had already been built. It set up a ratio that allowed Japan nine ships, and France and Italy five ships, for every fifteen ships permitted the United States and Britain.

A third major agreement, the Nine-Power Open Door Treaty, was signed by all the delegates. It pledged all the powers to respect China’s independence and territorial integrity and to uphold the principle of the Open Door.

Trying to Insure Peace

In the United States, public support for the Washington conference had come from a peace movement stronger than any in the past. Even though Americans had rejected membership in the League of Nations, the Republican administrations of the 1920’s were willing to cooperate with other nations in disarmament conferences and peace pacts. In time, the Republican leaders even came to accept the League itself as being of some importance to United States foreign policy.

After spurning the League, the Harding administration cautiously began to cooperate with it in 1922 by sending “unofficial observers” to conferences sponsored by the
League. Coolidge and Hoover continued and expanded such cooperation.

In 1927, the failure of a disarmament conference in Geneva, Switzerland, contributed to a loss of public confidence in disarmament as a means of insuring peace. But the peace crusaders had turned to another idea—a movement to outlaw war.

Acting upon this idea, on August 27, 1928, the representatives of fifteen nations met in Paris to sign the Kellogg-Briand Pact. This treaty pledged the signers to renounce war “as an instrument of national policy” and to try to settle their disputes by peaceful means. In time, sixty-two nations signed the pact.

In April 1930, a naval conference in London produced the London Naval Treaty. It extended the “holiday” on naval shipbuilding agreed to in the Five-Power Naval Treaty. The London treaty also applied limitations to the building of smaller warships, such as cruisers, destroyers, and submarines. This treaty, most of which was accepted by the five major naval powers—United States, Britain, Japan, France, and Italy—was the first in modern world history to limit all categories of ships.

A War in Asia

Although the United States and Japan had reached an accommodation on naval matters, tension between them had arisen again when Congress enacted the immigration law of 1924. While the act was under consideration, the Japanese had protested to the American government, saying that the new law would violate the “gentlemen’s agreement,” which they had carefully observed. Regardless of the Japanese protests, Congress went ahead with the law.

The bad feelings aroused by this law continued throughout the 1920’s, but later in this period the area of Japanese-American disagreements shifted to the Chinese mainland. Beginning in 1928, the Chinese went through their second revolution of the twentieth century. The leader of this revolution was General Chiang Kai-shek, who had taken up the work of Sun Yat-sen, the founder of the Chinese Nationalist party.

Chiang clashed with both the Soviets and the Japanese. In 1929, when Chiang’s Nationalists tried to take over the Soviet Union’s holdings in northern Manchuria, Soviet troops invaded the province and defeated the Chinese. Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson tried to stop the fighting by invoking the Kellogg-Briand Pact, which both China and the Soviet Union had signed. The Soviets said the United States was not the enforcer of the pact and should mind its own business.

Japan was alarmed by Chiang’s efforts to unify China and control Manchuria. Blaming the Chinese for a mysterious explosion on a Japanese railway near Mukden, Manchuria, late in 1931 the Japanese invaded southern Manchuria. Within a few months, Japan had conquered the province and set it up as a puppet state called Manchukuo.

Shortly after the Japanese invasion, China appealed to the United States, as sponsor of the Kellogg Pact, and to the League of Nations, under the covenant, to help keep the peace. Neither could do much. The League appointed a commission, which investigated the dispute and later condemned Japan as an aggressor. Secretary of State Stimson warned Japan that it was violating both the Kellogg-Briand Pact and the Nine-Power Open Door Treaty. Then on January 7, 1932, he announced what has become known as the Stimson Doctrine. It said the United States would not recognize Japan’s gains made in violation of the Open Door principle and the Kellogg-Briand Pact.

Neither the League’s condemnation nor Stimson’s nonrecognition doctrine stopped the Japanese. Japan retained Manchuria and withdrew from the League.
Improved Relations with Latin America

Many Latin Americans were as hostile to the United States as were the Japanese. They feared that the United States wanted to exploit and dominate them. Continued occupation of Nicaragua, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic added to Latin America's distrust of the United States. So did friction with Mexico in the early 1920's. Under Coolidge, American troops also went into Honduras and Panama. In 1924, the United States exercised extensive control over the finances of most of the twenty Latin American republics and had troops stationed in six of them.

Coolidge carried on a "private war" in Nicaragua. He supported one faction there with arms and American troops, while Mexico gave assistance to another warring faction. His troubles with Mexico increased in January 1927 when the Mexicans put into effect two laws that restricted the rights of foreigners who owned oil property in Mexico. These laws, as well as laws against the Catholic Church, led many Americans to clamor once again for intervention in Mexico. Instead, Coolidge sent Dwight W. Morrow to Mexico as ambassador. Morrow turned out to be a fine diplomat, and he helped overcome the major difficulties. Then in January 1928, Coolidge delivered the opening speech at the Sixth Pan-American Conference in Havana. This was only the second time a President of the United States had ever set foot in a Latin American country. It indicated a new concern for relations with Latin America.

Hoover was more concerned about Latin America than was Coolidge. Late in 1928, as President-elect, Hoover made a good-will tour of eleven nations in Central and South America. He told the Latin Americans that he disapproved of intervention, and that he wanted the United States to be their good neighbor. Later, his administration issued a memorandum that repudiated the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine.

Unlike his predecessors, Hoover did not start new interventions in Latin America. He denounced dollar diplomacy and began to end existing interventions. He removed marines from Nicaragua and began the evacuation of troops from Haiti. Although Latin Americans resented his signing of the Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act, which injured their trade, Hoover did improve relations with Latin America. His administration prepared the way for a stronger good neighbor policy.

Alienating Europe

Europeans also were upset by certain aspects of United States policy in the 1920's, particularly foreign economic policy. The nation's economic policy was of tremendous importance because the United States had emerged from World War I as the world's wealthiest power, greatest industrial nation, and most important market for raw materials and semifinished goods.

Between 1914 and 1919, the United States had also changed from a debtor to a creditor nation. European nations owed the United States about 10 billion dollars for war debts. Many European leaders had thought the United States would consider the money it had loaned as part of its general contribution to the defeat of Germany and that it would cancel the debts. Congress and the American people, on the other hand, expected full payment. They considered repayment a matter of national honor. In the 1920's, the United States government negotiated agreements with the debtor countries that called for repayment over a period of years. These agreements usually cut the interest rate and hence reduced the debts.

The European debtors then began paying their American debts from reparations received from Germany. This system worked for a while because private American investors loaned money to German industries, and the Germans used most of this money to
pay reparations. When the Great Depression struck, however, Americans stopped investing abroad. Germany halted its reparations payments, and the former Allies defaulted on their American debts.

These defaults caused anger in the United States, while Europeans were disappointed by the American insistence on payment. The Europeans felt that they had contributed far more blood on the battlefields of the war than had the United States and that the United States therefore should be glad to contribute dollars. Moreover, the money was loaned in the form of credits and goods sold at high wartime profits. The Europeans also resented America's high tariff policy, which they said prevented them from selling goods in the United States to earn dollars to pay the debts.

President Hoover tried to ease the debt crisis brought on by the depression. In June 1931, he announced that the United States would not demand payments on debts for one year if other nations would temporarily excuse German reparations and other debts. Hoover's action brought relief but did not get rid of the debt problem.

Early in 1933, Hoover started to renegotiate the debt agreements. Hoover wanted his successor, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, to agree to this debt policy. But Roosevelt refused to bind himself before taking office as President. Hoover left the White House with the debt structure crumbling about him. Some nations made token payments; then even those were stopped. Only Finland, with a small postwar loan, continued to meet its payments. The United States still has not forgiven these debts, and the European nations have never paid them.

A Look at Specifics

1. How were civil liberties threatened during the Red Scare?
2. In what way was the Harding administration involved in scandal?
3. Against which groups did the quota system of immigration discriminate?
4. Against which groups were the actions of the Ku Klux Klan directed in the 1920's?
5. Why was prohibition hard to enforce?
6. Why did Hoover oppose using federal money for the relief of the unemployed?
7. What attempts were made to bring about disarmament and an end to war during the 1920's and early 1930's?
8. Why did the issue of war debts lead to bad feelings between the United States and many European nations?

A Review of Major Ideas

1. In the years following World War I, how did workers attempt to improve their economic position?
2. What events and issues indicated a conflict between urban and rural Americans in the 1920's? How did ethnic divisions in American society aggravate this conflict?
3. What conditions led to the stock market crash in 1929? How did Hoover deal with the problems of the Great Depression?
4. In what ways did the United States participate in world affairs during the 1920's?

For Independent Study

1. In what ways did Hoover depart from tradition in his efforts to deal with the Great Depression? How did his commitment to tradition make it difficult for him to cope with the depression?
2. According to journalist Frank Simonds, the Kellogg-Briand Pact was "the high water mark of American endeavors for world peace which consisted in undertaking to combine the idea of political and military isolation with that of moral and material involvement." What events and issues would support this statement?